



Banner above depicts early season on Esopus trib, where wild brook trout are found.

April Zoom meeting: On April 28th at 7 PM the chapter will host a virtual Zoom meeting. Our guest speaker this month is Rick Little of Shadcreek Flies. This is a different program than listed in last month's newsletter, but should be very interesting. It's titled "Fly Fishing in Maine is Wicked Fun."



Rick will discuss the West Branch of the Penobscot, Rapid River, Roach River, East Outlet (headwaters of the Kennebec River), and Grand Lake Stream highlighting some of the wonderful rivers that Maine has to offer. Rick has spent hundreds of days fishing these waters and will talk about the rivers, his style of fishing, plus flies and techniques that have been successful. His program is filled with photos of these great rivers and flies used. For anyone who has fished

these waters, the program should spark many great memories. For those who have not fished these rivers yet, but want to give them a try, this program will provide information that will give them a head start when they venture out onto the water. Join Rick for a discussion about some beautiful country and fascinating fishing opportunities.

A separate email on this meeting, and how to join, will be sent out prior to the event, but for now mark your calendars. At our May 26th virtual meeting we are hoping to have Linda Zimmermann who has a program on Mysterious Stone Sites in the Hudson Valley.

Ashokan pump storage proposal: By now hopefully you read on April 12th, 2021 Premium Energy Holdings (PEH) withdrew their application before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to study a pumped storage project on New York City's Ashokan Reservoir. The project was known to FERC by docket number P-15056.

To all our members and readers, to all those folks who contacted FERC, participated in any of numerous community virtual meetings, who took the time to express their concerns about this ill-conceived proposal, CONGRATULATIONS. This was a great, swift, and sweet victory for us all!

FERC received almost 1,500 negative comments and objections regarding this proposal. And the project's service list includes some eighty-eight parties, plus the applicant PEH. In addition to numerous private citizens



who requested intervention status, so did the following: the City of New York; New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC); U.S. Department of the Interior; the Towns of Olive, Shandaken, Woodstock, Marbletown, Hunter; Ulster County Comptroller's Office; Ulster County Planning Department; Greene County Department of Economic Development; Onteora Central School District; Coalition of Watershed Towns; Catskill Center for Conservation and Development; Riverkeeper, Inc.; Catskill

Mountainkeeper; The Ashokan Center, Inc.; American Whitewater; Appalachian Mountain Club; Catskill 3500 Club; New York-New Jersey Trail Conference; Northern Catskills Audubon Society; Dette Flies; Theodore Gordon Flyfishers; The Coalition to Save Catskills Preserve; Woodland Community Association; New York State Council of Trout Unlimited; plus others. Hopefully one realizes what a diverse group of government bodies and agencies, nonprofits, special interests, and private citizens quickly came together acting in unison for the good of a common cause. And in some cases, newly formed citizen groups came about, just as the result of this issue.

For Trout Unlimited's part we were greatly assisted, and led, by the New York State Council. The Council was one of the first intervenors before FERC. We owe a special debt of thanks to Bill Wellman, Council Chairperson of the Hydro Committee and Larry Charette, Council Chair for leading the way and knocking on doors for us. The chapter was also assisted by Regional Council Chairs Roger Olson and Pat Crisci. We worked with the Catskill Mountains Chapter, and received support from other chapters including New York City TU and Mid-Hudson. Not only did the chapter submit comments to FERC, we worked with other groups and agencies, plus requested assistance from NYS DEC. In retrospect, on this particular issue Trout Unlimited was quickly running on all cylinders especially considering all of this happened in a little over two months' time from when a FERC permit was initially requested.

Possibly this project came under unbearable pressure starting on Thursday April 8th. NY Senator Michelle Hinchey held a press conference at the Ashokan Center, involving numerous parties, highlighting project issues before the general public; our chapter participated. Later that day, both the Town of Olive and New York City filed their negative comments with FERC. On April 12th NYS DEC intervened with FERC while filing a series of questions the applicant would have been hard-pressed to answer. As noted above, also on April 12th Premium Energy Holdings withdrew its application before FERC regarding the Ashokan pumped storage proposal.

Just to quickly reiterate and summarize one last time, what was at stake here was the drinking water of over nine million New Yorkers, basically 40% of New York City unfiltered water. The proposal had serious environmental issues, sought to displace local residents, negatively impact the local economy, plus take Forever Wild New York Forest Preserve lands protected by the state constitution. Some say potentially the proposal could have been precedent setting. From the beginning it was ill-conceived by a west-coast company

that never showed any initiative to reach to those affected by their proposal. Once again, thank you one and all who helped bring about this major victory.

Esopus Creek: NYS DEC R3 Biologist Bob Adams oversees Ulster County and the Esopus Creek specifically. He recently addressed chapter members at an earlier virtual meeting this year. Bob developed a pilot web survey/diary for Esopus anglers this season. He is hoping to recruit 20-30 anglers who regularly fish the Esopus Creek--- tributaries don't count at this time--- to help us evaluate the software. Bob is especially interested in the ease of use, functionality, and overall satisfaction with this type of survey. It will also provide a sense of what anglers are willing to provide and for how long. For this season at least, DEC will not use this survey to



evaluate the new regulations, and more specifically catch rates or angler satisfaction. DEC plans on addressing these items next season with a traditional creel. However, if this method seems promising, Bob may include a web-survey to accompany/compare with angler intercept results in 2022.

That said, the one question that will be monitored and valuable for 2021 is the rating for stream access (with an optional discussion bubble). This will allow anglers to describe any issues they are seeing at our Esopus Public Fishing Rights (PFRs) or DEC access sites. Bob hopes for a real-time sounding board for access-related issues.

The survey might seem a little long; so, if it becomes clear anglers will not take the time to fill it out, DEC may make it more compact. Initially, DEC thought the more the better. The survey can be accessed via phone, tablet, or pc at the following address: <https://arcg.is/15X1GL> Thanks for participating.

In collaboration with the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program, and in partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation, the Catskill Mountains Chapter organized a tree planting project on Bush Kill Creek, along Watson Hollow Road in West Shokan next Saturday, April 24th, from 10 AM to 2 PM, upstream of the Olive town office building. They have asked folks to pre-register by contacting chapter President, Ted Hoover at 845-598-4763 or email catskillmountaintu@gmail.com Park by the town office, meet/sign-in streamside, wear a mask, bring your own tools, social distance, lunch will be provided.

Acid rain report: Jody Hoyt reported in March there were 7 measurable storms as recorded in Boiceville, NY. These had a 5.8 weighed pH with 3.59 inches of equivalent liquid precipitation, including 0.6 inches of snow. By comparison in March 2020 there were 9 such events with a total of 5.02 inches of liquid precipitation, including 7.5 inches of snow and 5.6 weighted pH.

NYS Trout Stream Sportfishing Regulations: As of April 1st, New York has a new set of Trout Stream Sportfishing Regulations. Information on these found here: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/press/122602.html> Plus anglers can download, or request a paper copy of the new regs at the bottom of the forementioned link.

Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program (AWSMP): Recently chapter members participated in several AWSMP Working Group meetings including: Stream Ecosystem and the Stakeholder Council. Check the AWSMP website below for more information on these groups and AWSMP services in general.

APW TU chapter website: Kudos to Stephanie Blackman for redesigning, refurbishing the chapter website, from input/help from others. If you haven't checked it out yet, best do so now: <http://apwctu.org/>

Treasurer's report: Jody Hoyt reports as of the end of March the chapter had \$12,882.56, with \$12,094.88 in the General Operating Fund and \$787.68 in the Conservation Fund. During this month we received a net donation from former member Ken Babineau for a landscape watercolor of the Esopus Creek, that Lois

Ostapczuk donated to the chapter. Not reported in the March ending month is a \$50 donation that we also received from Herb Brooks, a Croton Watershed Chapter member and second-home owner in the Esopus Creek watershed, for our Ashokan pumped storage project efforts. Thank you one and all.

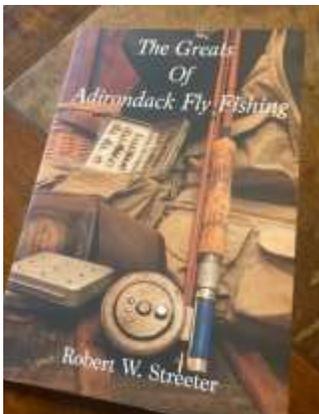
Your input needed: Trout Unlimited's fiscal year ends March 31st and our chapter needs to file an Annual Report that includes the **18 months of active that occurred prior to the end of March**. Our chapter treasurer Jody Hoyt needs to compile all volunteer hours incurred by chapter members in support of the chapter, NYS Council, or TU National. Attending general meetings do not count, but board meetings and travel time count. Items like fund raiser planning and execution, tree planting, preparing meeting minutes, East Branch Delaware temperature study, fly tying instruction, brook trout study, newsletter prep time, committee activities, attending other meetings while representing TU, AWSMP's Family Fun and Fish Day, Trout in the Classroom, plus all associated travel count. This is a simply a list of examples, and is not all inclusive. Be generous with yourself! It all counts! Hour totals, by event, should be emailed to capthoyt@aol.com **Jody needs your input by May 1st**. Thank you.

Membership: As of this newsletter, our membership stands at 124 members. This month we welcome Andrew Chader of Rye and Russell Walker of Chichester. Welcome! As always **new** TU members can join for half the "regular" membership fee, or \$17.50, of which the chapter receives a \$15 rebate from National. Membership forms: http://www.apwctu.org/pdfs/TU_membership_brochure2018_web.pdf For membership questions, contact me at: Tailwaters@Hvc.rr.com

Newsletter: This issue was sent electronically to all chapter members and friends that we have valid email addresses. If you received this and would rather not, please hit **REPLY** and write **REMOVE** and hit **SEND**.

Beyond our watersheds and other news: April/May 2021 virtual New York State Conservationist features trout: <https://cloud.3dissue.com/129417/129610/151833/AprMay2021NYSConsMag/index.html>

To help whet your appetite about our April chapter Zoom meeting, check out the 20-inch Maine wild brook trout former chapter member, and now fulltime Maine resident, Heidi Nute recently caught and released, using a streamer.



If you're into history and Adirondacks trout fishing, you'll probably enjoy this new book by Robert Streeter, *The Greats of Adirondack Fly Fishing*. I know I did. The author has written other books on fishing and used to pen a column for the *Albany Times Union*. His website is www.robstreeter.com



Kevan Best's monthly YouTube pick, the Cinberg, FYI: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4X8w3J71eU>

It's a dry fly I often use myself for summer brook trout, but last season watched a fishing buddy seduce several large Esopus rainbows using his version of an Isonychia Cinberg, while I looked on.



Useful links:

Ashokan-Pepacton Watershed Chapter Trout Unlimited: <https://apwctu.org/>

Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program: <http://ashokanstreams.org/>

CWC Watershed Currents: <https://cwconline.org/watershed-currents-e-news/>

Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District: <http://www.dcswcd.org/Stream%20Program.htm>

Esopus Creek hatching chart: <http://www.catskillanglingcollection.org/>

NYC DEP Reservoir Levels-Releases:

https://www1.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/drinking_water/release_channel_levels.shtml

Rondout Neversink Stream Program: <http://www.rondoutneversink.org/>

Until next time,
Ed Ostapczuk
April 18th, 2021